

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

LISTING OF CLAIMS

1 (Currently Amended) An automated software distribution method comprising:

receiving a request to access a software distribution system;

determining if the requester is a registered user;

~~if said requester is a registered user, determining if said registered user is~~
authorized to perform ~~either~~ a software development scaleable distribution framework
activity, said determining comprising examining a transaction right associated with said
registered user or a commercial scaleable distribution framework activity;

if said requester is authorized to perform said software development scaleable
distribution framework activity, performing an internal process associated with a
software project under development; ~~and~~

determining if said registered user is authorized to perform a commercial
scaleable distribution framework activity, said determining comprising examining a
transaction right associated with said registered user; and

if said requester is authorized to perform said commercial scaleable distribution
framework activity, performing a scaleable software distribution system commerce
transaction.

2 (Previously Presented) The automated software distribution method of Claim 1 further comprising, if said requester is not a registered user, notifying said requester that access is not granted.

3 (Original) The automated software distribution method of Claim 1 wherein the request is received from an internal user via an internal LAN.

4 (Original) The automated software distribution method of Claim 1 wherein the request is received from an external user via the Internet.

5 (Previously Presented) The automated software distribution method of Claim 1 wherein said internal process comprises allowing the user to access an internal storage of software products.

6 (Previously Presented) The automated software distribution method of Claim 1 wherein said internal process comprises allowing said user to download software code, make changes and upload the modified code.

7 (Original) The automated software distribution method of Claim 1 wherein a scaleable software distribution system commerce transaction is engaged in an electronic commerce environment.

8 (Original) The automated software distribution method of Claim 1 wherein a software transaction process is utilized.

9 (Previously Presented) The automated software distribution method of Claim 1, wherein said internal process comprises an internal software publishing process, said internal software publishing process comprising:

receiving a request to engage in software image publishing activities;

engaging in a data population process in accordance with a scaleable software distribution framework and object model in which objects are linked together by unique object identifiers;

checking information associated with a software project under development to ensure the requester has authorization to engage in software image publication activities;

receiving requisite supervisory authorization to proceed with the publication; and
executing a software publication.

10 (Previously Presented) The internal software publishing process of Claim 9 wherein the request is received from a software engineer that has built a software image ready for commercial release.

11 (Previously Presented) The internal software publishing process of Claim 9 wherein the data population process includes a software distribution framework (SWDF) Information Model, a SWDF Product Model and a SWDF Packaging Model.

12 (Previously Presented) The internal software publishing process of Claim 9 wherein a software distribution framework (SWDF) packaging model is completed by pulling data from a database that includes features that map a software image and software product code.

13 (Previously Presented) The internal software publishing process of Claim 9 wherein software distribution framework (SWDF) authorization information is checked to make sure the requester has appropriate role responsibility to engage in image publishing.

14 (Previously Presented) The automated software distribution method of Claim 1, wherein said commercial scaleable distribution framework activity comprises A a commercial transaction process, said commercial transaction process comprising:

- examining the commercial transaction rights of a requester;
- making a determination if the requester has entitlement to proceed with a commercial transaction;
- engaging in a commercial transaction entitlement process;
- investigating to determine if a requester successfully completed a commercial transaction entitlement process; and
- executing the requested commercial transaction.

15 (Previously Presented) A commercial transaction process of Claim 14 wherein a SWDF system stores information on the commercial transaction rights of external customers.

16 (Previously Presented) A commercial transaction process of Claim 15 wherein a SWDF system stores information on the entitlements of external customers to engage in commercial transactions.

17 (Previously Presented) A commercial transaction process of Claim 15 wherein SWDF Entitlement Information includes information on whether the customer has a service contract or paid money for the requested software product and if the customer has entitlement to proceed the requested software product is downloaded.

18 (Previously Presented) A commercial transaction process of Claim 15 wherein the commercial transaction process is an electronic commerce process.

19 (Previously Presented) A commercial transaction process of Claim 15 wherein the software product comprises software image binary executables, readme information, installation instructions, product manuals, guide and software requirements, and software release note, and software licensing key.

20 (Currently Amended) An automated software distribution system comprising:

a means for determining if a user is entitled to perform ~~either~~ a software development activity ~~or a commercial activity~~, wherein said software development activity ~~or said commercial activity~~ is accessible through said automated software

distribution system, said determining comprising examining a transaction right associated with said user;

a means for determining if said user is entitled to perform a commercial activity, wherein said commercial activity is accessible through said automated software distribution system, said determining comprising examining a transaction right associated with said user;

a means for communicating information associated with an automated software distribution method;

a means for processing said information associated with said automated software distribution method; and

a means for storing and tracking said information associated with said automated software distribution method, wherein said automated software distribution method utilizes a scalable software distribution framework and object model in which objects are linked together by unique object identifiers.

21 (Previously Presented) An automated software distribution system of Claim 20 wherein said information associated with an automated software distribution method is organized in accordance with software distribution framework (SWDF) modules that manage the software distribution information and activities in accordance with SWDF models.

22 (Previously Presented) An automated software distribution system of Claim 21 wherein said information associated with an automated software distribution method is

organized in accordance with a software distribution framework (SWDF) database, wherein SWDF database schema components are configured in accordance with four categories comprising regular database tables, composite link database tables, associating link database tables and runtime information query components.

23 (Previously Presented) An automated software distribution system of Claim 21 wherein said information associated with an automated software distribution method is tracked and manipulated by means for indicating classes, attributes and operations.

24 (Previously Presented) An automated software distribution system of Claim 21 further comprising a means for managing different areas of framework information including user information, authorization information, software information, configuration information, commerce information, publication information, and distribution information.

25 (Previously Presented) An automated software distribution system of Claim 21 wherein a link database is table is a persistent storage for the relationship of two objects.

26 (Currently Amended) An automated software distribution apparatus comprising:
a bus for communicating information associated with an automated software distribution method;
an input mechanism for receiving requests from a user for access to said information, said user having associated transaction rights;

a processor for processing said information associated with an automated software distribution method; and

a memory for storing and tracking said information associated with an automated software distribution method, wherein said automated software distribution method utilizes a scalable software distribution framework and object model in which objects are linked together by unique object identifiers.

27. (Currently Amended) The ~~An~~ automated software distribution apparatus of Claim 26 wherein said bus is communicatively coupled to a communication network.

28 (Previously Presented) The automated software distribution apparatus of Claim 27 wherein an automated software distribution method is implemented via said communications network.

29 (Previously Presented) The automated software distribution apparatus of Claim 27 wherein an XML-based software distribution framework is utilized to enable automatic distribution of software over the Internet and World Wide Web (WWW) while coordinating, correlating and collecting information that assists software distribution management and maintenance activities.

30 (Previously Presented) The automated software distribution apparatus of Claim 27 wherein software images are published based on software rights associated with a

business rule/responsibility model and software products are distributed to customers based on commerce model.

31 (Currently Amended) A computer usable medium having a computer readable program code embodied therein for causing a computer system to perform an automated software distribution method, wherein said automated software distribution method utilizes a scaleable software distribution framework and object model in which objects are linked together by unique object identifiers, said automated software distribution method comprising:

receiving a request to access a software distribution system;

determining if the requester is a registered user;

determining if a user has authorization to perform ~~either~~ an internal software development, said determining comprising examining a transaction right associated with said registered user or commercial scaleable software distribution framework activity;

if said user is authorized to perform said internal software development activity, performing an internal process associated with a software development scaleable software distribution framework; ~~and~~

determining if a user has authorization to perform a commercial scaleable software distribution framework activity, said determining comprising examining a transaction right associated with said registered user; and

if said user is authorized to perform said commercial activity, performing a scaleable software distribution system commerce transaction.

32 (Previously Presented) The automated software distribution method of Claim 31 wherein the request is received from an external user via the Internet.

33 (Previously Presented) The automated software distribution method of Claim 32 wherein the user is able to access an internal storage of software products.

34 (Previously Presented) The automated software distribution method of Claim 33 wherein an internal user is able to download software code, make changes and upload the modified code and both internal and external users are able to engage in a scaleable software distribution system commerce transaction.